

COVID-19 GUIDE FOR

KEEPING BUSINESSES SAFE AND OPEN!

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Close contact to COVID-19 occurs when you are within six feet of someone who is showing symptoms for at least 15 minutes, or an infected person who shows no symptoms, but later tests positive for the coronavirus. This is considered exposure regardless of whether one or both parties were wearing a mask.

- The Center for Disease Control

A note to business owners:

I created this guide after having to close my own business (during a holiday as well- and we know what that means financially as a business). I would like to share the biggest mistake I feel that I made. While we have implemented strict cleaning regimens, use UV lights and sanitizer (which we make), ensure a great deal of airflow, and wear masks; I forgot to do 1 thing. The staff member who tested positive had returned from traveling by plane out of state. I should have created a work space for the employee to isolate them for 4 days from the others, and then had them tested with a nasal swab. Although this seems a bit restrictive, I could have prevented a complete shutdown of my business and a huge financial loss. Learn from my mistakes, use this as you wish, and i hope that it helps you to see what you do have control of. Some of the suggestions might seem crazy to you as your business is currently open; but i guarantee that when you are closed and have no income, you would then do whatever it takes!

Paul Menta

A. Preventing the Spread of COVID-19 in Your Business

The following points are steps businesses can take to be preemptive in ensuring that all staff are Covid free each day when they arrive for their shift, and mitigate the potential spread of Covid during their working hours:

1. Clock In Log: Take each employee's temperature with a reliable thermometer and check for physical symptoms. Also question whether they have had any interactions outside of the workplace with anyone who has tested positive.
2. Employee Distancing: Remind staff each morning to try to stay 6 feet apart from each other as much as possible. If they must get closer, remind them that the period of

proximity should not last longer than 10 minutes. Note: In a kitchen or retail area staff can rotate positions to lessen the time spent in close proximity.

3. **Rearranging Space:** While this may seem impossible, the goal is to make as much space between people (customers and staff) as possible, in the space available. The key is to mitigate the chances of anyone who is carrying the virus being able to spread it to others, thus resulting in a shut down. Consider implementing these steps:
 - Make space between cash registers
 - Create gaps in the kitchen for cooks who don't need to be on top of each other
 - Create a line between two bartenders, which they do not cross
 - Operate at 50% capacity
 - Move tables and/or products outside
 - Before making physical changes, consider first making a grid of your workspace layout on paper or on your own computer in order to look at creative ways to create space. This will save you time and could actually give you ideas. Share this initial plan with friends as they might see what you don't.
4. **Timed Hand-Washing:** Set a timer for managers or for yourself, 3 times per hour, to tell everyone to wash their hands. Stock up on soap and towels.
5. **Mask Wearing:** This stops the spread and decreases the risk of someone infecting other staff, especially if they do not know that they are positive. This virus lives up in the nasal passages. All of our staff who tested positive via nasal swab, also had saliva testing within the same 24 hours; which were all negative. Until we have increased access to testing I think this is a small sacrifice to keep a business open.
6. **Shifts:** If possible, separate shifts in your business as much as possible to avoid cross contamination. Consider staggered times and clear separation in which one shift takes over the “front of the house”, while the other works on cleaning or “back of the house,” duties, and both crews remain 6 feet apart.
7. **Last Person Standing:** One person (normally the owner or General Manager) should at all times limit space between him/herself and the staff and customers. To the furthest extent possible, this person should be separated in an office, or at least in a place that is at all times 10 feet away from the staff. Should there be a spread of Covid within the business, this individual would still be able to open and close and operate in a limited capacity (depending on the nature of the business). Showing a friend or family member how to run the register or open the doors is a great backup in case everyone is exposed. Smaller businesses in particular could maintain shorter hours with the help of friends so

that there is still an income. Make this preparation for the worst and if you never need them, then you already succeeded.

8. Cameras: Have cameras in key areas where employees are most often in close proximity. If there is a positive case, then you can review the footage to see who else might have been infected while being in close proximity with the positive employee for more than 15 minutes.
9. Educate: Have a copy of current guidelines and a list of what to do so that you can follow this if something happens. (See below.) Share pertinent information regarding spread, precautions, symptoms, and what to do upon suspected exposure.

B. Dealing with staff who have symptoms, have tested positive, or who have been exposed to COVID-19

If you suspect or can verify the possibility of an infection amongst your employees, it is absolutely necessary to take immediate measures in order to further prevent spread. Do so by following any or all of the following steps:

1. **If an Employee Notifies You of Symptoms**: Have them tested immediately. There is a 1 hour test at 1010 Duval Square for \$95.00. Appointments should be made in advance, either online via phone. Dr. Norris will also come to you to do a nasal swab.

While waiting for results, look up when the last time that employee worked. If possible, play back your video camera or cameras and follow the employee's day. (It took me about 1.5 hours for a 7 hour shift to fast forward and see who had had contact for 15 minutes or more while within 6 feet during the shift.) Any staff member who was in contact with the potentially infected staff member should be quarantined. Next, create a list with dates and a timeline for each employee, in order to begin preparing for them to return back to work.

Create the timeline and document any associated notes right away. You will be stressed, and it will be difficult to recall certain details when you need them later. The concern about people, financial issues, etc. will make your head spin, so document it all right away.

Once the person with symptoms receives their results, then you will know who needs to continue quarantining. Those staff who were not exposed can continue to work. While this may impact your hours temporarily, it is a far better option than having to close down entirely.

- 2. Employees Who Have Been Exposed to a Person with COVID-19:** For those who have been exposed to the person who tested positive, it is necessary for them to wait (while in quarantine) for 4-5 days before getting tested.

Note: The CDC is looking at changing the exposure quarantine to 7-10 days instead of 14, as the greatest risk of infection is in the first 5 days. During the subsequent days of 6 – 9, the potential for infection decreases considerably.

The owner, General Manager or assigned staff members should call or text those in quarantine daily, to make sure that they are okay. If necessary, individuals who are not in quarantine can deliver food, water, and other items to the door steps of those who must stay home.

- 3. Communicating with Your Customers:** It is important to communicate with your customers by posting positive social media messages explaining why you have limited hours or are closed. Reassure them that the business is taking every precaution in order to ensure that the staff is 100% COVID free before re-opening.
- 4. Innovation:** If the owner or General Manager is in quarantine, utilize this time for creative innovation. There has never been a better time to start thinking about online products and services. Starting small is still starting! Take preorders, reorganize, and brainstorm new ideas.

**Please use this link from MIT that calculates risks for your business!

<https://indoor-covid-safety.herokuapp.com/>

Attached below is a publication from the Monroe County Health Department that offers additional guidelines and suggestions.

IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU NOTIFY YOUR CLOSE CONTACTS THAT YOU TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19. THEY WILL NEED TO QUARANTINE IMMEDIATELY.

What counts as a “close contact”?

- You were within 6 feet of someone (with or without a mask) for 15 minutes or longer (cumulative in 24-hours.)
- You had direct physical contact with someone (handshake, hug, kiss etc.)

- You shared eating or drinking utensils.
- The interaction occurred during your contagious period, which starts 48 hours before you got sick (or 48 hours before your test date if you have no symptoms.)

How long does my close contact have to quarantine?

- **14 days** from the last day they had close contact with you.

How to quarantine:

- Stay home. Do not go to work, school or any public areas (indoors or outdoors.)
- Do not allow visitors.
- Separate yourself as much as possible from others in the home. Separate bedroom and bathroom is ideal. • Arrange for food and other necessities to be delivered and left at the front door.

If your close contact has symptoms:

- They should wait at least 3 days after the symptoms began and then go get tested.
- The Monroe County Health Department provides free COVID-19 testing. Appointments are required and can be made by calling 786-910-9764 or testingmonroe@flhealth.gov. Must be Monroe County resident with a valid ID. • Many urgent care clinics and doctor offices in the community also provide testing. Call ahead to inquire. Tell them you had close contact with a confirmed case when booking the appointment.

If your close contact does NOT have symptoms:

- They still **NEED TO QUARANTINE!!!**
- 40-50% of all Covid-19 cases are people with no symptoms at all and account for the majority of community spread of the virus. These people look and feel fine but can still be contagious and are putting the health and safety of other people at risk.

If your close contact has tested negative for COVID-19:

- They still **NEED TO QUARANTINE!!!**
- The incubation period for the virus is 2-14 days, which means some people are contagious very soon after exposure and some people it can take up to 2 weeks before they become contagious.
- The test is just a snapshot in time, and it is possible for someone to test negative one day and test positive the very next day.

If your close contact says they already had COVID-19:

- People who tested positive for COVID-19 within 3 months do not need to quarantine if they are symptom-free.

Anyone with general questions should call the Florida Department of Health's Covid-19 Call Center